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LETTER

TO

WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQ.

CONTAINING

STRICTURES ON HIS LATE PUBLICATION

ENTITLED

*Considerations on the Causes, Objects, and
Consequences of the present War.*

LIVERPOOL PRINTED.

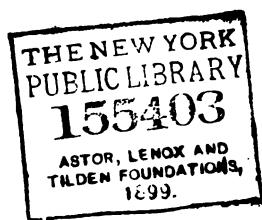
NEW-YORK REPRINTED,

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Opposite the Branch Bank.

1808

XVII



A LETTER,

8c.

SIR,

WAR is an evil of such magnitude, involves so many scenes of individual and national calamity, and is so repulsive to every enlightened and liberal feeling, that those who either inflict it without cause, or continue it beyond the demands of necessity, equally deserve the execrations of mankind. As it is the "*last reason*," so it ought to be the "*last resort*," of kings. No means should be left untried to preserve the relations of amity, so essential to the vital interests of all countries without exception, and no opportunity favourable to the return of peace (the best of human blessings) ought to pass by without regard. A power, originally injured, if it refuse reasonable and safe terms of conciliation, becomes equally guilty with the first aggressor, and changes its relations. What was at first an act of defensive resistance, then becomes an act of unjustifiable offensive encroachment.

Feeling the impression of these truths upon my own convictions, I should have gone with you to the full length of those pacific sentiments contained in your pamphlet, had they stood in the simple and commanding majesty of truth, wholly disconnected with the rancour of party and the perversions of prejudice. He must, however, have read y
tormance with little attention who does
ceive, that whilst you contend for pe
eign powers, you do it in the spirit of o
tility ; and that your opinions are sup
exaggerated on the one part, and c
oured or wholly suppressed on the
Sir, I hope to prove in the sequel a
allegations ; and though I respect
admire your talents, I shall not

ther from pursuing the tract of fair manly inquiry into the real merits of your political labours, though it may be at the expense of the exposure of the fallacy of your arguments, and the deficiency of your candour.

You have observed in your preface, "that the honour of the nation is the honour of the people, and the disgrace of the nation their disgrace." On this ground, Sir, I meet you. I feel interested in the honour of my country—I should blush at her disgrace: and it is because I think that you have libelled her character; because you have assimilated yourself to those hireling editors of the French and German papers, whose daily effort it is to degrade her in the eyes of Europe; and because the whole tendency of your pamphlet is to produce distrust and create alarm and by paralising the energies of the people in the present contest for all that renders political existence valuable, the independence of the country, is defeating its own object, the accomplishment of a speedy peace; it is, Sir, I say, for these reasons that I become your opponent. Your name, it is true, may give a sanction to your opinions; that advantage will be wholly in your own favour; but the true merits of the question are not to be thus determined, nor truth confounded and driven from the field by the "whistling of a name."

It is not my intention to follow you paragraph by paragraph, for the objects you have embraced are not only multifarious but without method. The principal argument, and the general tendency of the book only, will be noticed in the following strictures.

The origin of the war with France you pass slightly over; and for that reason I shall not dwell long upon it. In fact, that subject has been discussed in so masterly a manner by the ablest of our senators and political writers, that the resuscitation of it cannot now be further necessary than as it may serve to elucidate the main principle of your pamphlet. Like other writers on the same side of the question, you

argue against the policy of the war in all its stages, and against its longer continuance, from the defeat of its great objects, and the distressing situation into which we are now reduced. " All the motives which " have been alleged in its justification, have long " since ceased to operate ; whether it was entered " into for the preservation of the established order " of Europe ; to repress those persons in this coun- " try who, in the early part of the French revolution, " disinterestedly rejoiced in the prospect of amelio- " ration in France ; to restore the house of Bourbon " because the government with which we had to " treat was unable to maintain the accustomed rela- " tions of peace ; or to obtain indemnity for the past " and security for the future," (pages 4—6.) " We " are now left without an ally, without an object, and " without a cause," (page 53.) As these arguments are continually urged by persons of your party with an air of triumph, and are calculated by their specious appearance to make some impression upon the unthinking, they merit on these accounts some examination.

Granting that the war has completely failed in its objects, as you would wish your readers to believe, it does not by fair logical deduction follow that it has been impolitic in its origin and progress, or that we should desire its immediate termination. Nothing can be so unfair as to argue from the failure of a project to its impolicy. It is an argument certainly unworthy of a sensible man to say, because you have not succeeded you ought not to have attempted. And yet, in the case before us, is not this the amount of all that is here advanced ?
ground all unsuccessful attempts to resist
may be censured. Should we even fail in
to drive the Gallic legions from our own
future political writer might arise a
that the augmentation of our navy,
people, and every other military arr.
defence, were only the results of a
of weakness and infatuation.

But you, Sir, and your friends have dealt much in political prophesyings ; your constant language is, " these events were foretold, they happened as " might have been expected." Now, Sir if the disastrous consequences of the war were so discernible, is it not a little surprising that they were not obvious to the minds of the most illustrious statesmen which ever directed the councils of any nation ? Why were they not convincingly plain to the majority of our nobles in the House of Lords, why did they not stand up in all their horrors to the majority of the representatives in the Lower House ? Why, if you suppose corruption and undue influence in the senate, did they not alarm the majority of thinking men in the nation ? But if these prospects into futurity only were opened by supernatural illumination, it is scarcely consistent to impute blame to those who had no more than the ordinary irradiations of unaided reason to guide their inquiries, or to direct their conduct.

Political predictions, however, like astrological ones, are entitled to all their credit by a lucky hit. Wide and multifarious conjecture must in something be realized ; and political prophesy, which predicts any thing and every thing, must in something be accomplished. But it is fortune-telling still ; and however, by the accidental credit it acquires, it may support the vanity of those who pretend to more than ordinary foresight, it can never be legitimately made either the foundation of practical policy, or the ground of political censure. Your mistake, Sir, lies in judging of the former measures of British statesmen by their present consequences. But what was deeply hidden in futurity to them at the time such measures were adopted, is now open to us in its causes, conduct, and effects. We have turned over that page in the book of fate which they were not permitted to touch. Is it then candid to decide upon their conduct, as though they possessed the attribute of omniscience ? In strict justice and common honesty, we ought to place ourselves in the same circumstances before we can de-

cide upon the merit of their measures; and suspend our censures, unless we can prove that those were either extravagant in their principles, or improbable in their execution.

Whatever objects you, Sir, may attribute to the war, no argument that has ever been offered, has proved that it has had any other, than the resistance of French aggressions upon the independence of Europe. England at first entered reluctantly into the war; she remained neutral amongst conflicting powers, she disclaimed the idea of intermeddling with the internal arrangements of France; and that step was not taken till after France had opened the navigation of the Scheldt, in contravention to the most sacred treaties, till she had unfolded her views of universal conquest, and proclaimed war against every state in the universe by her decree of the 19th of November, 1792; in which the "national convention declare, in the name of the French nation, "that they will grant fraternity and assistance to all "those people who wish to procure liberty; and that "they charge the executive power to send orders to "their generals to give assistance to such people as "have suffered, or are now suffering, in the cause of "liberty." England hesitated to join the contest until her good faith to her allies, her national justice, and best interests, forced her into it. Lord Grenville demanded of France, "to renounce her views "of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine "herself within her own territories without insult "other governments, without disturbing the "quillity, without violating their rights." V
swear did France give to this reasonable
She declared war against England, a
to the world that she had formed o
was actuated by other motives. T
controversy I know, Sir, is old,
to set our readers right in the m
tween us.

As this was the original grou

has been that of all the coalitions formed against France since that period. From the first to the last, the war against that power has been against her ambition and her encroachments, and, consequently, *defensive*. The independence of Europe has been the stake ; the value of that independence was appreciated by the lucid mind of Mr. Pitt, it was the rule of his conduct towards France ; it is appreciated by us, but we know its value now only by its loss. The experience of the present moment proves how vitally it is connected with our interests. Let every Englishman lay his hand upon his breast and say, of what value that independence is to him, now the object of the first revolutionists is realized, and Europe, at the feet of France, arms all its powers, and shuts up all its resources against England. It must therefore follow that as the principle of the war was *just*, so have the persevering efforts of England been *politic*. The object of the various coalitions has been the most glorious. They have reflected the highest honour upon England. She has exhibited herself in the struggle which has convulsed half the globe, as the patroness of the weak, and the coadjutor of the powerful. She has lifted up her arm against universal usurpation, and has undeviatingly opposed the wild furor of revolutionary anarchy, and the less popular, but destructive, efforts of a military despotism. That she has partially failed in the conflict, is nothing to the purpose. Success is not honour, neither is defeat infamy ; the contest has been noble, and its failure may be attributed to causes which, with all submission to your superior illumination, human wisdom, generally speaking, could neither foresee, nor human power prevent.

In this conclusion we are completely at variance ; you loudly condemn the policy of the war, because "it defeated its own purpose, and brought on the "complete overthrow of that which it pretended to "support," (page 4.) "In the commencement of the "French revolution, (you observe, page 19,) France

" was not military. Her first defenders were a raw
 " undisciplined soldiery. The attack of her enemies
 " called out her energies, and she has overthrown
 " the proudest monarchs of Europe. *Had she been*
suffered to establish without interruption her own
form of government, such a result would not have taken
place. It was, therefore, the attack upon France
 " that converted that country into a nation of sol-
 " diers, and compelled her to have recourse for her
 " defence to a government purely military." But be-
 fore these can be allowed as valid arguments against
 the *policy* of the war, you must prove that France has
 acted wholly on the defensive; that she entertained
 no projects of dangerous ambition, and never designed
 to arm Europe against its lawful sovereigns. You
 must *prove* these, Sir, as well as *hint* them. Arguing
 all along from these principles, you ought first to
 have supported your premises, and not by assuming
 that as undoubted truth, which thousands both in
 England and on the continent would dispute with
 you, blind your readers, and hide the weakness of
 your cause. But you have not proved them, you
 cannot prove them.

Every thing you have said of the French revolution,
 carries with it an avowal of approbation. You wish
 to impress it upon your readers that there was no-
 thing more in that event, than an innocent and
 praise-worthy attempt to ameliorate the condition
 of France by changing its government, and that all
 the horrors of the revolution and the military de-
 signs of France were produced by not " si
 " her to establish her own form of governm
 " by the pressure of external force."
 of the subject is by no means corre
 no interference in the internal affairs
 til she herself provoked it by the
 conduct towards other powers.
 new doctrines broached in Frar
 the sovereigns of Europe, they took
 sures against France until she had

of treaties and of nations, refused the reasonable satisfaction demanded, and the avowal proposed by the Emperor Francis, “that the French should not consider themselves, from their revolution, entitled to violate the rights of other powers.” France might have established her own form of government without interruption, had she not seized the property and dominions of other states; she might have remained at peace had she restrained her ambitious frenzy; but she proclaimed war because such aggressions were resisted by the surrounding nations. The rulers of France precipitated her into a war which they might have avoided. There was something sublime in the idea of contending against all the despots of Europe; it suited the wild ravings of democratic madness; they were uneasy until they had preached a crusade against every existing government in the civilized world.

That the “pressure of hostile force called forth the energies of the French nation,” and brought into action the most splendid military talents in her commanders, is an observation which allows of no difference of opinion; but if urged as a reason against the war with France, may be equally applied to wars in general. To the states of Europe no alternative was, however, left but to seize the moment of early resistance to France, who had refused the most reasonable terms of pacification; or calmly to see the rights of the weaker states invaded, and the completion of the arrangements of an universal plot, which was to spread anarchy, murder, and confiscation, through the whole of their own dominions. France had filled every country with her emissaries, the flame had begun to kindle, delay in this case was destruction, and not a sovereign in Europe would have deserved to wear his crown, if by a criminal inaction he had waited until his army had been seduced, and his people armed against his government. You, Sir, it should seem from various passages in your work, would have regarded the extension of the principles of the French rev-

olution as a desirable object; and this in you is consistent enough, because you regard the atrocities of that political convulsion as arising rather from accidental circumstances, than from its principle: but for myself, believing firmly from an attentive examination of the subject, that it was in its principle defective, and politically futile; that every one of its horrors arose out of the nature of the thing, and from circumstances confined solely to the French nation; that it was rather the offspring of metaphysical pride, atheism, and the worst principles of the human heart, than of solid wisdom and public spirit; I must conclude that if the war has had no other effect than the prevention of the dire effects of revolutionary horrors, Europe is benefited by the war; that the sovereigns confederated against France made a wise choice in the side of the alternative they adopted; and I had much rather read in the page of history the conquests of Bonaparte, than have perused the bloody records of the acts of sovereign mobs, the devastations of the guillotine, and the triumphs of political theory and religious infidelity over the order of nations, and the sanctuaries of religion.

That this would have been the state of Europe if no war had been entered upon is more than possible, it has the *strongest probability*. It was the design of the French leaders to revolutionize the world. Brissot, in his letter to his constituents tells them, “*The determination is made to brave all Europe;*” and proceeds, “*What did enlightened republicans wish before the tenth of August, men who wished for not only for their own country, but FOR ALL?*” “*They believed that they could establish in the governed against the governors, in pleasure the facility and advantages of such* These views were not confined to *ty, they were the solemn acts of the* the 15th of December, 1792, the published a decree in which they *decided* “*will treat as enemies, the people (u*

*"refusing or renouncing liberty and equality, are de-
"sirous of preserving, recalling, or entering into an ac-
"commmodation with their prince and privileged casts."*

It should here be noticed, that on the *very day* the decree passed the assembly, the executive council wrote to their agent Chauvilin, in London, instructing him *"to disavow all hostile intentions on the part of France
"and to proclaim her detestation of the idea of a war
"with England;"* hereby marking the dangerous designs of the French government, and the subtle hypocrisy with which it covered its diplomatic transactions.

What the consequences of this vigorous spirit of proselytism would have been on the continent, had not active measures been resorted to, may be concluded from the rapid and alarming extent of such principles in England previous to the war. Even in England, under the mild and rational government with which she is favoured, where the persons and property of every individual is respected, and where industry, even in the lowest classes, except under very peculiar circumstances of national depression, is ever rewarded with a comfortable subsistence; in this country, Sir, those who *"disinterestedly rejoiced in the prospect of amelioration in France,"* (page 4,) addressed congratulations to the national convention, approbatory of the principles and process of the revolution. One of those addresses expressed the hope *"that the same doctrines would be received, and the same example generally followed in other countries,"* whilst that of the London Corresponding Society outstripping the rest, endeavoured to convince the convention that the sentiments entertained by them *"existed also in the hearts of all the free men of England."* *"We enjoy"* (say these patriots,) *"by anticipation and with common hope, that epoch, (not far distant) when the interests of Europe, and of mankind, shall invite the two nations to stretch out the hand of fraternity."* The objects of these societies were not unknown; the mobs which imbi-

bed the sentiments they spread through the nation were ripe for every deed of mischief and of blood which had began to mark the conduct of the sovereign people on the other side of the channel, and the contagion was rapidly spreading when it was arrested by those whom you term the "gloomy advocates of tyranny," but who will be regarded by every man not ready to hazard every thing in support of a political theory, the *saviours of their country*, and the *best friends of the best interests of man*. But if the state of things was so alarming in England as to call for all the vigour of the government, on the continent, supposing every state to have remained an inactive spectator of the affairs of France, revolutions upon revolutions in almost endless succession must have convulsed, and, it is probable, almost have exterminated society. On the continent the emissaries of anarchy had been more than usually busy ; their principles had been secretly operating for a series of years ; and the communication between the continental states being by *land* only, was free and unrestrained. England might have shut herself out from France *even* remaining neutral, but the other powers had no such advantages. The captivating promises of liberty and equality would operate upon them with a force proportioned to the *real* grievances of the people under the defective continental government ; remaining at peace, they could not even have depended upon the the military ; and universal revolt sanctioned by French armies, which the love of plunder would have operated powerfully as the "pressure of external fo
which you alone ascribe the military ex
France, would have shaken every estal
as completely have placed the continent influence, as the victories of an o

It ought likewise to be remark tious designs of France are neither nor the result alone of the tower chief who now seats himself on

ancient monarchs. The French are naturally an ambitious people, and fond of military glory. It is as essentially the character of that nation, as the love of independence is the character of England, and commercial gain of Holland. The dispositions of her military emperor harmonizes with this prevailing national passion ; and to this, joined to his great successes, he owes that influence which has elevated him, upon the ruins of the old monarchy and the late republic, to supreme government. But his schemes of conquest are not originals; neither has he alone rendered them familiar to the hopes and wishes of the French people. France had the same designs of ambition in the subjugation of the continent, in the early stage of the revolution, as she has during the later periods of the war manifested and acted upon. The plan of aggrandizement which has been since realized in the humbling of the northern powers, and the partitioning of Germany, was laid as early as the year 1793. Publicola Chaussard, commissioner of the executive power, then said, "It is the interest of France to raise herself to the rank of a first rate power in Europe; thus covering with her shield the second-rate powers, and protecting them against the boundless ambition of the northern empires. A war *ad internectionem* is declared between the republic and monarchies. Austria being once subdued, the Germanic body may become a colossus of federative republics, and change the system of the north." For federative republics only substitute the *confederation of the Rhine*, and you see the career Bonaparte has since followed precisely pointed out, and the object he has, after a long effort, at length accomplished, distinctly marked. Will you, then, tell us, that if France had not been opposed, she would not have accomplished those objects which she has attained in spite of the vast coalitions which have been formed against her ! This conclusion is evidently absurd. Had the powers of the conti :

nent remained at peace, she would have involved them in anarchy, and seized their dominions. Resistance held out the fairest probabilities of success in repressing her intentions; but though resistance has failed, the continent is saved from civil disorder; though partitioned, it has regular governments, and every change must be apparently for the better. Time, or the chances of the war, may throw the states into the hands of the lawful princes, or the clashing of interests produce new and contrary alliances, which, by restoring the balance of power, will once more establish the independence of Europe.

I shall next proceed to examine the opinions you have given of the peace of Amiens, and the causes which led to the renewal of hostilities with France after that event.

This peace, notwithstanding the sacrifices which were made on the part of England to obtain it, has a large share of your approbation. The point is now, however, not worth disputing; but it is evident, from the most cursory review of the articles of that treaty, that from the narrowness of its principle it held out but very feeble hopes of permanent tranquillity, except to those who were ready to catch at every shadow which bore a pacific resemblance. The relations of the two powers were not accurately defined; no bar was put upon the ambition of France; and it was unattended with a treaty of commerce, an object of the first consequence in preserving a good understanding between the powers. From these circumstances it conveys the time to a great number of thinking men a nation, a low idea both of the sincerity and of the ability of the administration to fulfil the arrangement. A treaty which makes no kind of temporary provision for the day, neglects to look into futurity, a consideration as possible, those mutual obligations which give permanence to the relations of the two countries, and leaves them in a situation considerably far worse than continued hostility.

no more than a truce. It gives a little breathing-time to the belligerents, who afterwards rush into hostility with new causes of irritation, and with more deadly rancour. That the treaty of Amiens was of this kind, subsequent events have fully proved. You have, it is true, detailed a number of causes which led to the renewal of the war, all of which, by your manner of stating them, and the method you have made use of to force them out of their connexion, tend to throw the odium upon Great Britain, and completely exonerate France. But on this part of your performance, I must take the liberty to observe, that you have descended to the mean arts of a low polemic; and, by the evident want of fairness and candour, have exposed yourself to the severest censure. When you represent those persons who viewed that reconciliation with dissatisfaction, (page 9,) "as persons of mercenary views and exasperated "feeling," and attribute the renewal of the war to "the clamours of the French emigrants, and the "bands of journalists and hireling writers, who fat- "ten upon the calamities of a nation;" you may enjoy the petty triumph of blackening your adversaries, and prejudging the question: but, Sir, the subject is not to be so disposed of; and as you have omitted to introduce those facts into your "Considerations" which would have enabled your readers to form a better judgment of that proceeding of the British government, justice requires that the deficiency should be supplied.

The manner in which the definitive treaty itself was negotiated, augured nothing very favourable to the interests of this country. It was protracted, cold, and harassed by questions and discussions on subjects before settled in the preliminaries. After all it was little more than a transcript of the preliminary arrangements, and, as before noticed, instead of taking a wide and general basis, left equal room for the future assumptions of the enemy and the complaints of Britain. The ambition of Bon-

parte could not be even restrained until the definitive treaty was signed : almost immediately after the signing of the preliminaries, " Louisiana was " added to the power of France. This was not all— " the ink was still wet, the wax was not yet cold, " with which this treaty was concluded, when Pied- " mont, the bulwark of Italy, was annexed to the " French empire. Then seeing the indifference of " the government of Great Britain, the blow was " struck by which the ancient ally of the British " crown, the King of Sardinia, was driven back " from his seat. Let us look back into the progress " of events. The treaty was made in the month of " March, it was ratified in May ; in June, Pied- " mont was by a formal decree annexed to France ; " in August the consular government made a grand " sweep and disposal of the entire constitution of " Germany and of the powers in it. Not a day had " elapsed, (he might challenge observation on the " word,) not a single day had elapsed, without some " act of insult, indignity, or attack upon Great Bri- " tain or her ancient allies since that time."* But there were causes which operated more immediately upon the interests of this country, and produced suspicion in the government and alarm in the people. Not only was Switzerland invaded, and her long established liberties entombed in the yawning sepulchre of Gallic rapacity; not only was Holland kept in a state of the most abject subjection in opposition to the terms of the treaty, her navy at the disposal of France, and hostile preparations for in her ports, which, whatever might be their sible object, were of a nature to excite the very ministry that had concluded the France, British property had suffered violence, while justice in the French denied to British subjects ; a number illiberal restrictions had been laid

* Lord Grenville's speech in the Ho

merce ; and designs of the blackest treachery against the internal peace of this country were discovered, happily in sufficient time to prevent their ripening into danger, but which did not for that reason less strikingly mark the character of the power with whom we had so lately interchanged the pledges of friendship.

Colonel Despard and his accomplices were, on the best authority, believed to be in the pay, and under the direction of, France.* The peace had scarcely been concluded, before a number of persons were landed in different parts of Great Britain and Ireland, under the name of commercial commissioners, but who were proved, on examination, French military officers. In their possession were found instructions from the French ministers, directing to such inquiries as could have no relation to commerce, and could only be useful in a military view. The Addington ministry were at length awakened by these events, and appeared to manifest some symptoms of repentance for having placed too much confidence in a government which, whether in peace or war, cannot be too jealously suspected. The army and navy were increased ; mutual distrust received every day some new addition, and the communications respecting the British press and the island of Malta, led to those discussions which at length terminated in the complete breach of that hollow truce, flattered much when called the *peace of Amiens*.

Having just refreshed the memory of your readers by a rapid sketch of occurrences, with which, for *certain reasons*, you did not think proper to trouble them, I shall now attend more particularly to your remarks on this important subject. In page 11 you assert, "that the disagreement between the two countries, "which led to fresh hostilities had no foundation in "any unavoidable or substantial cause." To prove

* It was proved in evidence, that Colonel Despard himself avowed this connexion, and deferred one of his projects because "he waited for news and money from France."

this, you pass over rather lightly the evacuation of Egypt and Malta by the English, and the evacuation of Holland by the French, by just observing that these difficulties were in a course of removal, when M. Otto called the attention of ministers to the French emigrants, and the abusive publications against the government of France which daily issued from the press. This is a point on which you insist with much warmth, and perhaps for this reason, that as you wish to make the grounds of the war appear to the public to be the most trifling, you would rest them upon the refusal of government to keep a certain number of newspapers in awe, not by holding up the lash of the Attorney-general in the ordinary way of prosecution for libels, for this would not satisfy the irritable chief of the French nation, but by the exercise of a previous control over the press by the executive power. As this is a very disingenuous mode of changing the argument, so it is not a little inconsistent. Whilst at one time you stand forth as the champion of unbounded liberty, you here crouch to a tyrant, and obliquely become the apologist of an interference with the internal arrangements of other governments in a case which most deeply affects the best interests of liberty, the freedom of the press. This freedom, more unequivocally than any thing beside, marks the difference between a free and an enslaved state. It is, when unfettered by illegal restraints, the engine of the greatest possible good to a free people; but let it be touched t
wand of power and it is converted into a m
sive instrument of tyranny, it loses its en
cause free discussion is proscribed, &
public confidence because it is suspe
guage of truth will not then be spo
it is dictated by interest ; and as in
the present state of things, conn
than with truth, it will oftener do
and more frequently injure than
conveyed through such a medium

I will, however, freely admit with you, that the *licentiousness* of the press ought to be restrained ; that many publications of an indecent kind, and offensive to foreign governments, have been issued : but why so tender of Bonaparte ? Why have you not complained that the best allies of England have been treated by the prints devoted to your party with the most vulgar abuse and unmansly rancour ; and that paragraphs in English newspapers have been so well suited to the palate and views of the enemy, that he has made use of them in place of original compositions, finding them more acrimonious against England and more favourable to the cause of France than even his own retained editors have had the courage or *modesty* to write. You mention the subject of these offensive publications, it is true, as an historical fact necessary to the elucidation of your argument, and rather cloak your opinion of the propriety of restraining them under the mask of general observations ; though you certainly implicate the conduct of the British government as well as the individual writers engaged in the contest. But in this there is an evident attempt to mislead your readers. You have given part of an answer of Lord Hawkesbury to the representation of the French minister, but you *might* have found a dispatch of his Lordship's which would more forcibly have displayed the merits of the subject to your readers. With respect to the libels alleged to be published against the French government, he expressed "his assurance that his ma-
 "jesty could not and never would, in consequence of
 "any representation or menace from a foreign pow-
 "er, make any concessions which could, in the small-
 "est degree, be dangerous to the liberty of the press,
 "as secured by the constitution of the country.
 "That the constitution admitted of no *previous re-*
 "straints upon publications of any description ; but
 "that there existed judicatures, wholly independent of
 "the executive government, capable of taking cog-
 "nizance of such publications, &c." This was an

answer equally agreeable to justice and the independence of a free state. Under some circumstances you, too, would have avowed it. Had it been an answer from the French court to a British complaint, you would have written it in letters of gold, you would have studded it with diamonds.

This mode of redress was as open to the first consul as to his Britannic majesty himself. "These judicatures," it was observed by Lord H. in his reply, "might take cognizance not only of libels against the government and magistracy of this kingdom; but, as had been *repeatedly experienced*, of publications defamatory of those in whose hands the administration of foreign governments was placed." Here then was a legitimate mode of proceeding pointed out; but it ill accorded with the summary process required by the man who, having extinguished every spark of liberty in France, and forced the presses of that country and other European states into his own service, was indignant that the British press alone dared to investigate his character, to criticise his government, and to warn the world of the dangerous maxims of his policy.

In page 98, you demand, with an air of lofty defiance, "at what period since the revolution has the French government proposed to us to relinquish any of our liberties and laws?" I answer, *at this*. That government wished the British press to be controlled by the executive, contrary to the constitution. Nothing it might deem offensive was to be published. Had this been admitted, would the system of interference have terminated here? Bonaparte complained of the speeches in parliament, as belligerent newspapers; would you, Sir, have had to have conceded the freedom of speech as well as the liberty of the press? Strong as your bias is towards France, as your confidence appears to be in me, I believe you would not. A statement has been made somewhere, and it was

as well as more effectual, to resist the first attempt upon our internal arrangements and established laws.

With respect to the French emigrants, it is only necessary to quote the reply of the British government on that subject. "It was affirmed, that the "greater part of the persons alluded to by the French "government were living in retirement, and that "there was no reason whatever to suppose that, "since the conclusion of peace, they had availed "themselves of their residence in England to pro- "mote designs injurious to the government of "France."

On the share which the evacuation of Malta had in producing a recommencement of hostilities, you are rather inconsistent. In the paragraphs in your pamphlet I have been just animadverting upon, you would attribute this even to the libels of the British press; but, in page 100, you say, "We might have continued at peace in 1803, if we would evacuate Malta, as we agreed to do by the treaty of Amiens." Passing over this apparent contradiction, I must observe, that the view you have given of this subject, like the former, is far from being fair or accurate. You seem to encourage the notions assiduously spread by a party at that time, that the refusal to evacuate that island was an act of faithlessness on the part of the British ministry; and that the peace was broken for the sake of a possession uninteresting to Britain. But the conduct of the Addington administration, I think, was in this respect free from blame. That they were sincere in making the peace, I believe has been allowed by all parties; and it may therefore be fairly concluded that they sincerely intended to fulfil all its articles. Arrangements were entered into for the purpose of evacuating Malta, agreeable to the treaty. Difficulties occurred to prolong that measure, but still there was no appearance of insincerity. Before these could be removed, France herself had made infractions on the treaty; and, as before noticed, began to pursue a conduct,

and to manifest a disposition, which augured a speedy rupture between the two countries. Malta was, therefore, retained till the French government should enter into a new arrangement. The treaty was not *literally fulfilled*; but this is a gross view of a subject, when disposed into the form of a charge, for what may not at first sight appear just, will be often found so upon explanation. The terms of a treaty are not binding only upon one party, they hold both, and when the conduct of one party is in direct opposition either to the express terms of an agreement, or to its evident spirit, so as to nullify its intention, the other is justly exonerated from the obligation.

With respect to the importance of Malta it may be said, that, considering only the intrinsic value of that island, it would have been most ridiculous to make that, simply considered, the ground of war. But though on the face of the litigation Malta occupied the most prominent place, the contest was rather between the ambition of France and the safety of our eastern possessions. The possession of Egypt it is notorious, even from the confession of Bonaparte himself, was an object nearest to his heart. The preservation of our India possessions was one of the greatest objects for dispossessing the French of that station before the peace of Amiens; and it was natural that what we had achieved by a career of honourable victories, should be guaranteed by that treaty. This was done. The 8th article stipulated "that the territories," &c. "of the Sublime" "were to be maintained in their integrity." Bonaparte, after the treaty of Amiens, did not then his designs upon Egypt, nor made any attempt to submit to the restraint of its report of Sebastiani, ostensibly a commercial agent, but in reality a military spy, disclosed such intentions were still entertained, and placed beyond a doubt by the first consul with Lord Whitworth.

ciations were still pending. He concluded his observations on the subject of Egypt, with observing, "whatever might be his desire to have it as a colony, "he did not think it worth the risk of a war, since "sooner or later Egypt would belong to France, either "by the falling to pieces of the Turkish empire, or by "some arrangement with the Porte." Under such circumstances was Malta to be surrendered? To Bonaparte, Malta could be of no value but as aiding his designs on Egypt and India; to us it was of no value but as it afforded security to both. In proportion, therefore, as the anxiety of France respecting Malta became more urgent, we had additional motives for retaining it; and when the first consul declared he would rather see us in possession of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine than that island, it was time for Britain to determine to keep it for ever.

This indifference with respect to Malta and Egypt is not a little singular in you, who have held up a participation in the East India trade to the town of Liverpool as an object of petition to parliament, and have endeavoured to acquire a degree of popularity by that proceeding. At the last election an attempt was made to prop up your sinking cause by connecting your name with that hope, and by hinting to the electors that you would use every exertion to open to them that valuable channel of commerce. The placards on the walls, inscribed "*Roscoe and the East India trade,*" met the eye in every direction. For the interest you have at any time taken in the welfare of your native place, you are entitled to its thanks; but it is strange that you should censure the British government for their precaution in checking the designs of the enemy in that quarter of the globe to which you directed the attention of your townsmen to find an indemnity for the dilapidated state of their commerce, produced by the abolition of the slave trade. But, perhaps, in this, as well as other instances, you have an unbounded confidence in the honour, the integrity, and

the moderate desires of the emperor of the French. You have, however, been exceeded in the sacrifices you would have offered at the shrine of the ambition of Bonaparte, in order to maintain the peace of Amiens: Earl Stanhope would not only have evacuated Malta and Egypt, he would have given to France the islands of Guernsey and Jersey!!!

From a review of these circumstances it must be left to our readers to determine how far your observation is just, "That the disagreement of the two "countries, which soon afterwards led to fresh hostilities, had no foundation in any unavoidable or "substantial cause," (page 11.) Every impartial man, I am persuaded, will come to a very opposite conclusion. But be this as it may, no man, who is not disposed to follow a party to its last dregs, can allow the intemperate abuse you have lavished upon those who were either dissatisfied with the peace of Amiens, or sanctioned a new declaration of war against the enemy. That such were merely "hireling writers, placemen, pensioners, or contractors," is either a scurrilous libel, or an intentional falsehood. With respect to the peace of Amiens, the opinions of men were much divided, not only in the nation but in the parliament. It was applauded by Mr. Pitt and many of the members of his administration, and was loudly condemned by those who formed conspicuous parts of that, under the banners of which you ranged, and whose measures you supported during the period of your ephemeral senatorial existence. Great as the joy was whi tidings of peace produced, it was soon follow a change of sentiment when the encroaching France could be no longer hid. You change to the efforts of hireling journ: seem to forget that these journalists w opposition to the ministry of that not therefore be in the pay of there were hireling advocates for wa also hireling clamourers for peace

those who painted the deformities of Bonaparte, were there not also those who, as in the present day, trumpeted his virtues? You call them *alarmists*, and this, it is true, is an alarming word; but what, Sir, is an alarmist? If he be one who, from the watch-tower of observation, discovers hostile movements, and dangerous designs on the part of the enemy, and faithfully rouses his country to a sense of danger, in opposition to the attempt of those whose feminine minds ever sooth into compliance and lull into security, an alarmist is an appellation of which no patriot ought to be ashamed; but if you regard the persons who called upon the energy and spirit of the British nation at that time to resist the assumptions of France as instigating war because they had an interest in it, and as agitating the public with false and groundless alarms, you implicate, not only French emigrants and hireling writers, but also the most distinguished patriots and statesmen, of almost every political party, that ever adorned a country by their virtues, or honoured a senate by their talents. To prove this it is only necessary to refer the readers to the debates in parliament the 23d of May, 1803, upon his majesty's message to the house announcing the rupture between the two countries. What were the majorities in favour of the measures of the British government? In the House of Lords, contents 142; non-contents 10! In the Commons, for the address 398; against it 67! Had the emigrants, the journalists, the pensioners, deceived the two houses of parliament also? You outrage, Sir, the understanding of your readers.

I shall conclude these observations with the following extract from a speech delivered on that occasion by Earl Moira, who from his political opinions you cannot object to as an impartial evidence. "Our jealousy and alarm were excited by that in-
" corrigible spirit of encroachment and ambition
" which not only the first consul, but in fact all the
" persons connected with the government of France,

“ had for some time manifested ; and even if Malta
“ were in our hands in perpetuity, we should not
“ sit down contented until some further security
“ should be obtained : of this the nation ought to be-
“ ware. The fact was, that, from the present state
“ of this country, there was no option ; either the
“ attempt to reduce that power must be made,
“ or the nation must fall down to the most abject
“ and degrading submission. The main object of
“ the war, if it be either popular, or politic, must be
“ to restrain the arrogance—to reduce the prepon-
“ derance of the French government : and until that
“ object be attained, the war should not be aban-
“ doned—until France should not be capable of en-
“ dangering our existence, whatever might be the
“ disposition of her government to injure us.” His
Lordship concluded by observing that, “ if this
“ country were to be engaged in war, it ought to
“ receive a confident assurance that it did not go
“ into it, merely for colonial pursuits for petty con-
“ tests, but for *great national interests.*”

Upon the whole, when we reflect upon the pacific character of the ministry that concluded the peace of Amiens, and the sincerity that they manifested, immediately after the peace, to fulfil its conditions, it is not to be doubted that if *they* were alarmed there was cause of alarm ; and as their political existence extended long enough to enter upon a new war ; it may be inferred from their characteristic disposition, that they were forced into it by the most pressing causes, the aggressions of the enemy and danger of the country. In your reflections breach of amity, you, however, think that :
ment the Addington administration
the war, the fairest opportunity was h
country, not only of peace, but of
You found this opinion on the conve
parte with the British ambassador. A
“ he said that if he had not felt the
“ British government on every o

" peace of Amiens, there would have been nothing
 " that he would not have done to prove his desire to
 " conciliate—*participation in indemnities* as well as in-
 " fluence on the continent; *treaties of commerce*; in
 " short, any thing that would have given satisfa-
 " tion, and testified his friendship." From these
 fair promises of the first consul, to the truth of which
 you give as grave an assent as to a mathematical
 demonstration, you as gravely infer, (page 23,) " If
 " peace had been the object of the British ministry,
 " here was the ground-work of it; if security, here
 " was the season for finding it; if *aggrandizement*, this
 " was the opportunity. In an arrangement upon
 " these grounds this country would have made no
 " sacrifices," &c. Much, Sir, as I am astonished
 at your *credulity*. I am more so at this evident display
 of a want of *consistent principle*.

In citing this conversation, you have been guilty
 of a kind of literary deception, which is not unfre-
 quently practised. Whilst you have exhibited the
 tempting offers of "*participation in indemnities*," and
 "*treaties of commerce*," in *Italic* characters, to catch
 the eyes and engage the unusual attention of your
 readers, that sentence which is to be considered as
 the key of the whole of this part of the conversation,
 stands embodied in plain *Roman*, deprived of this
 supplemental aid to force it into notice. As I have
 got now into the habit of supplying your omissions,
 I take the same liberty on this occasion. "*Two such*
 "*countries*," observes the consul, "*by a proper under-*
 "*standing, might govern the world.*" This is the sen-
 tence which explains the whole. The language is
 too plain to be mistaken. "*Join your fleet to my*
 "*army, assist in the accomplishment of my designs*
 "*against Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Germany, against*
 "*all the rest of the world, and you shall share the*
 "*spoils, you shall participate in indemnities.*" This
 was indeed, Sir, an opportunity for *aggrandizement*.
 If the British ministry had consented to become the
 tools of Bonaparte's ambition, they might have had

indemnities and treaties of commerce. The ground of the hatred of Bonaparte to England is, because she is the only power that stands between him and universal dominion. Had she been *silent* on the subject of his encroachments, he would have continued at peace; but had she *co-operated*, he would have yielded "any thing to testify his *friendship*." And yet you observe that "in an arrangement on these 'grounds, the country would have made no sacrifices." What! would the country have made no sacrifices in becoming the accomplice of a public robber, in departing from the track of fair manly resistance to the encroachments of universal despotism, and in yielding the energies, given her by Providence for her own defence, into the hands of the scourge of nations, the "tyrant of the continent?" I profess, Sir, that when I read this part of your book, it was with difficulty that I could persuade myself that you were in earnest. "But what, you ask, was the answer of "the British ministry? A *total silence* on those most "interesting and important topics." And what answer did they deserve, but a contemptuous silence? Even to have listened for a moment to such an infamous proposal would of itself have been sufficient ground of impeachment.

The disclosure of the views and wishes of the French government in this conversation, were amongst the foremost of those causes which excited the spirit of the English nation against France, and which produced a vigorous co-operation with the government of the country after the declar^a war. You seem to attribute this wholly to tional affront contained in the French *E.*

"England alone could not contend w
Had this been the case, as an English
have been proud of the reflection, as i
licate sense of honour, and prov
pursuits had not so changed the ..
as to render it insensible to milit
idle vaunt was not the principa

the spirit which led to so determined a resolution on the part of the people. The conduct of the French ruler, from the signing of the preliminaries of the peace to the renewal of hostilities, all served to mark the real character of the enemy, and to impress the nation that its safety alone consisted in pursuing the strongest and most vigorous measures. But when, after the declaration of war, an invasion was threatened, the character of this country was placed in its most imposing light. You, Sir, have treated this subject rather lightly; but, for myself, I esteem it glorious to have lived in an age, when the generous youth of Britain rallied round their "hearts and their altars," when party itself was absorbed in the common cause of the country, and when it was proved in the most unequivocal manner, in what estimation the constitution and independence of Great Britain was held by its inhabitants, by the sacrifices they then made to defend them. That this spirit was ridiculed and depressed by the coldness, the insults, and theoretical war systems of a late administration, is a subject of deep regret, as it may serve to enervate the future energies of the people, when called again to associate for the common defence of the liberties of their civil establishment, and the honourable rewards of their industry. But the principle though depressed, still exists, and will, I trust, be found as equal to the refusal of a peace, which would sacrifice the interests of the country, as to resist the invasion which would endanger its existence.

Having dismissed the peace of Amiens, you take a rapid survey of the events which almost immediately followed the renewal of the war: the change of ministry, the conduct of the continental war, which terminated so fatally by the battle of Austerlitz, and the death and character of Mr. Pitt. Few as the pages are which you have devoted to these subjects, they are superfluous additions which have little relation to the scope of your pamphlet. Ap-

parently glad of the opportunity of impugning the ability of Mr. Pitt, in conducting his own measures, as well as his wisdom in adopting them, you have said, "that if the object of that coalition "had been laudable, the misconduct and folly of "those who gave rise to the alliance, were such as "must in the eyes of impartial posterity, brand them "with indelible disgrace," (page 31.) What the opinion of our posterity will be on this subject, is not, I believe known either to you or me; it is probable that there will be as great a variety of opinions on the political questions of the age in which we have lived at the end of a century as at present. In the case before us, that there is "folly and mis- "conduct" to be charged *somewhere*, the result of that unfortunate campaign has rendered too evident to be denied; but that they are to be attributed chiefly to Mr. Pitt and his friends in administration, is an inference which, unless your impartiality has been somewhat partialized, you would not so hastily have reached. "This folly and misconduct," in your opinion, consisted in not binding the King of Prussia by the alliance, and in the "blind confidence "that the accession of Russia would ensure the co- "operation of Prussia." This co-operation was certainly highly to be desired, and would in all probability have decided the contest in favour of the allied powers; the confidence felt in the accession of Prussia to the common cause, was certainly supported by the conviction that the interests of that party dictated that line of conduct, and therefore *blind confidence*. But, Sir, it was not necessary to the success of the coalition should become one of the parties, nor appear that unlimited confidence w friendship. Austria and Russia, if been united, would have been ec nor is it to be supposed that Mr. that they should engage separate neither resulted from the plan of

necessarily followed the rapid movements of the French. The Austrian force might have retreated until it had met the Russians ; and this movement, though it would have exposed the Austrian territory, was infinitely to be preferred to the course that was taken. In fact, the principal blame of that affair appears to rest with the court of Vienna. The general it appointed was either a traitor or unequal to his appointment, or the court itself guilty of a temerity bordering upon madness. All this, you say, "was foreseen," and therefore might have been avoided ; but, Sir, it is easy to frame predictions when the events are past.

But were the conduct of Great Britain as blamable as you assert, it would prove nothing against the principle of the war or of the coalition. The truce of Amiens had already shown that, whether in peace or war, the enemy not only pursued a course of spoliation on the continent, but a system of hostility against the commerce, the government, and every interest of this country. The most moderate men of every party, the Addingtons who made the peace, even Whigs themselves, joined in the sentiment—" Unless France be humbled, Britain is unsafe; either the attempt to reduce that power must be made, or the nation must fall down to the most abject and degrading submission." This was the voice of the parliament and of the nation, and although the failure of the attempt added to its difficulties, it has left "to *impartial posterity*, to admire that noble love of independence which resisted a successful despotism with so much energy, and that firm spirit which remained unbroken under the pressure of multiplied disappointments and calamities."

The mismanagement of the allies, which you obliquely attribute to Mr. Pitt, whose ever-to-be-lamented death succeeded the battle of Austerlitz, gives you an opportunity of uttering a laboured and malignant philippic against the memory of that dis-

tinguished statesman. It would be pitiful to follow you into the detail of the political vices you attribute to his character. His merits can receive no addition from the panegyric of my pen, nor have they suffered any detraction from the obloquy of yours. The richest monument of the son of Chat-ham is in the *heart of his country*, which still cherishes the most grateful remembrance of the wisdom and policy of his administration, the uprightness of his conduct, and the ardour of his patriotism. Very different, however, are your feelings, and perhaps you have furnished the reason in page 36. Speaking of the French revolution, you observe, "It was "Mr. Pitt's first misfortune to be insensible to the "grandeur of so glorious a struggle; his second to "miscalculate its consequences. The first act of "France was to hold out her emancipated hands to the "free states of England and America; but the cold- "ness of the minister soon convinced her that in this "government she was not to expect a friend." *Hinc iræ, hinc lachrymæ.* This was the unpardonable sin of Mr. Pitt; for which he was loaded, by a violent party, with every kind of abuse whilst living, and for this, malice still barks over his ashes. But, Sir, Mr. Pitt was not a theoretical politician, his eye was too strong to be dazzled by the false glare with which the novelty of French principles, and the vivid eloquence with which they were adorned, encircled the revolution. "The emancipated hands "of France" were stretched out to England and America; but neither the sober mind of Wa-ton, though president of a republic; nor c though prime minister in a nation e greater portion of true liberty than earth, regarded the invitation to befriend of Gallic republicanism. France " "emancipated hands," but they were with murder, and blackened with y she "held out her hands" to Britai mean for help,) she was secretly e

an attempt to pull down our constitution and laws, and in sowing the seeds of discord and rebellion in every state within the reach of her influence. "A "limited monarchy" did not satisfy those who fo-mented the first breach of the social order in France. Those who assumed the direction of affairs after the humiliation of Louis, for the most part were the ad-vo-cates of the most levelling democracy ; and there is good evidence to be produced that they themselves provoked external hostilities and domestic mas-sa-cre-s, that they might with a better grace murder their monarch, and rear the fabric of their idolatry upon the ruins of their country. These views were not latent, they discovered themselves in almost every act of the French reformers from the beginning, they were obvious to the discerning eye of Mr. Pitt. Would you have wished him to make England a party in a civil war ? to aid a Parisian mob against its sovereign ? to have declared war against Germa-ny, Prussia, and the other confederates, because they had declared war against France ? and to have participated with France in her crimes that she might become a sharer in the spoils ? This is another in-stance of your inconsistency. To interfere in the internal arrangements of France in favour of royal-ty, was a crime too great for forgiveness ; but if that interference had been in favour of a factitious liber-ty, it would have been a noble sensibility "*to the "grandeur of so glorious a struggle !"*" But to the grandeur and glory of this struggle Mr. Pitt was in-insensible ; and so, I believe, was every man in the country who was not either an ideot too weak to reason, or a philosopher reasoning himself out of the region of common sense ; a partisan making use of it as a convenient instrument to blow up the flame of dissension, or a leveller who only waited the watch-word of sedition to give him the property of his neighbour.

Your reflections on the ill success of Mr. Pitt's policy, which follow, I have anticipated in the for-

mer part of this letter, and shall therefore only notice the observation, "that the principle which carried the French nation through all her difficulties was the determination of the people to rally round the existing government, *whatever that government might be.*" In that respect the French are to be applauded, nor shall I object in this instance to your indulging yourself in your favourite bias; but the observation affords just occasion of admonition to you and others of the same party; and it may be asked whether you as *Englishmen* have done that which you praise in *Frenchmen*? The ministry of this country is its *government* for the time being. But, Sir, have you rallied round it? Have you, even in cases where your private convictions on political measures would have suffered it, endeavoured to give the existing ministry the respect and confidence of the country? Have you been willing to praise, and reluctant to condemn? Have you, amidst the dangers of your country, hushed personal invectives and party clamours, and absorbed these unmanly partialities in the great considerations connected with the welfare of the empire? Have you never endeavoured to frustrate plans of national policy, that the odium of the failure might rest with your opponents, and artfully endeavoured to excite the hopes or the fears of the people to produce a change of sentiment, in order to effect a change of administration? If I may be allowed to answer these inquiries myself, I will say, that taking your party in the aggregate, almost every effort of theirs, *out of place*, has tended to discourage the people of this country, and to infuse vigour into their enemies. Your pamphlet, Sir, has this ~~ter~~ home, though it is not likely to find its ~~w~~ and the conduct of your friends in opposition sufficiently applicable. If they speak of in terms calculated to give permanence to the arrangement of that power from England to the Danish expedition, every thing that is ~~a~~

to strengthen the bonds of northern confederacy ; if of France, it is with a respect that might impress its government that in England a powerful party is devoted to its interest ; if of the country, the colouring is so dark, that every hostile power must be encouraged to withhold that peace from us which they demand from our own government, in hope of our entire humiliation ; and if of Ireland, every topic is chosen which is calculated to keep alive the flame, the *opposition themselves* have kindled—to encourage the enemy to invade, and the Irish to receive him. For the sake of consistency, if not of patriotism, if you praise the French for “ rallying round their go-“ vernment, *whatever it might be,*” when their country was in danger, *go, Sir, and imitate the example.* I am very far from thinking that an opposition is not highly useful and necessary in this free country, or that the liberty of speech ought to be restrained. Were there even no party ends to serve, no projects of ambition to gratify, the difference of opinion always found in man would on many subjects of policy unavoidably create an opposition ; but the present party in the house distinguished by that name, (I except some individuals,) would be entitled to more respect, and would more essentially serve the interests of the country, if their pride were less assuming, their desire of place less obvious, and their contempt of their opponents restrained within narrower limits of modesty. If, burying their party quarrels, they would recollect that the *state is in danger*, and that their public duty demands the union of all that is great, wise, and patriotic, in the nation.

After noticing the change of ministry consequent on the death of Mr. Pitt, you proceed to give an historical narrative of the negotiations opened with France by the new ministers, which, according to your statement, took its rise from the refusal of Mr. Fox to become a party in a plot to assassinate the chief of the French government. Admiring, as you do, the principles and politics of that gentleman, to

have taken an opportunity of paying a tribute of respect to his memory as a man, or his talents as a senator, would have been an effort of friendship or of admiration which could have given offence to none, however they might differ from your opinions. But, Sir, had I, who certainly do not carry my admiration of Charles Fox as far as yourself, been disposed to have panegyrized his character, I could have selected many greater virtues from his heart than that circumstance called into action. It was surely but little to say that his heart recoiled at a murderous proposal; it was little to prove in favour of your friend that he was *not an assassin*. A foreigner reading your book, if unacquainted with the character of the English nation, might very naturally infer that their is a hideous deficiency of the great principles of justice and humanity in the country, when a political writer is driven to the extremity of praising a state officer because of his refusal to become an accomplice in a murder! The seriousness with which you treat this subject is indeed throughout ridiculous. It is not enough that this refusal should stand for the index of Mr. Fox's virtues as a man, it must also be alleged as a proof of the soundness of his principles as a politician. "He had the *courage and virtue* to bring forward into "public life, and to exemplify in the most striking "manner, one of the most important maxims of morality, that it is never expedient to do evil in "hope of producing an eventual good," (page To the truth of this axiom I give with y strongest assent; but I confess that I am discover that the conduct of Mr. Fox in illustrated it in "the most striking man it required any effort of "courage" to b into "public life" in a country and our own. But, Sir, the manner in stated this anecdote only adds: many you have already afforded, or position you have shown to degi

and to impeach the characters of all who have pursued a different policy to that which you could approve. Why, if such a disposition does not exist in your bosom, should you wish to represent this maxim of political morality as buried in obscurity till Mr. Fox introduced it into public life? Why hint that the British government had for so long a time departed from the most obvious principle of justice, that it required an extraordinary exertion of "*courage*" on the part of a secretary of state, to assert and act upon it? Why intimate that this "*virtue and courage*" existed only in a whig and in a whig ministry? That neither Mr. Pitt and his friends in office formerly posseed them? And insinuate that the persons now in office, had the same proposal been made to them as to Mr. Fox, would have acted the part of murderers and assassins, (see page 77.) It was thought by impartial men a violent stretch of modesty for the opposition to assume "all the *talent* of the country; but you have carried them still farther, you have given them all the *virtue*.

The negociation to which this display of negative virtue on the part of Mr. Fox gave rise, is of great importance. It served to mark, in the strongest manner, the character of the enemy, and the insecurity of Great Britain, whilst he retains his immense superiority over the continent. You have gone into an historical detail of this transaction, though not exactly with the fidelity, which, according to general opinion, an historian ought to possess. As far as a proper respect to your friends who conducted that affair would allow, you have endeavoured to give a colouring to those communications, in favour of France and against the decision of your country; but after all your attempts, the pages in your pamphlet which you have employed on this subject, stand as a complete refutation of the main principle you have endeavoured to establish, that the French government has been uniformly disposed to conclude peace with this country upon safe and honour-

able terms. The Pitt administration had repeatedly declared that a secure peace could not be made with France. A party in the nation who had made some proselytes through the disasters of the war, and the disappointment of their former hopes were not satisfied with this declaration.—The Addington party was then brought in, and made a peace, which they found it impossible to preserve. “ We are at war,” said the pacific Addington himself, “ because we *“ cannot be at peace.”*” The advocates for the continuance of peace were silent until the destruction of the third coalition raised the desire and excited the cry for peace again. Mr. Fox was then in office, who from the first had opposed the war, and who throughout all its stages had called aloud for its termination. Mr. Fox made the trial, and after his death the negotiations were continued by his friends, and the conclusion to which they brought the whole was, that the principle asserted by Mr. Pitt and his friends, and which they had at different times so violently opposed, was *strictly true*,—that “ No secure peace could be made with France.” They inform the people “ *that all their dearest interests are at stake, that no sacrifices they can be called to make, can be compared to the certain disgrace and ruin of yielding to the injurious pretensions of the enemy.*” Even you, Sir, make this reflection upon the unfavourable result of these endeavours to restore peace—“ that when a negotiation, begun by Mr. Fox, and the successful result of which was stated “ by him in his last moments to be one of the two great objects for which he was most anxiously licitous: when such a negotiation fails, ui conduct of his surviving coadjutors and who declare to the country, that the general tranquillity was retarded, injustice and ambition of the enemy, all of peace is abandoned, and nothing a main for the people, but to unite the in accomplishing the destruction ble foe.”

But, notwithstanding this, we are not allowed to rest the matter here, because that would implicate the character of France to a greater extent than you wish to impress upon the public mind. In page 56 you allow that because peace could not be made with France on terms satisfactory to Russia, our good faith to our ally might be a sufficient cause of hostility, "inasmuch as no sacrifices we can ever be called to make are too great for maintaining the character of the nation for honour and integrity clear and unimpeached;" but you will not allow us this without a drawback. "This," you observe, (p.7,) "is rather to be attributed to the unfortunate effects of our having formed such an alliance, and to the necessity of adhering to it, than to *any misconduct on the part of France.*" If to use those arts of which French statesmen are complete masters, to beguile the ambassadors of other powers, or by political finesse to effect a separate peace between Russia and England only for the purpose of making more advantageous arrangements for France, were the only charges to be alleged against the government of that country, the general laws of diplomatic transactions would, I believe, exculpate it from blame; this liberty, being, by a kind of mutual consent, allowed to address and intrigue in all parties; but if there were no real sincerity on the part of the French government to make a peace honourable to all the parties concerned, according to its own professions; and if France wished for a peace only to tie up the hands of other governments, whilst she herself intended to be left at liberty to pursue her own plans of aggrandizement, then France in this affair is to be charged with the *grossest misconduct.* A peace of this kind Bonaparte has always been willing to make; such a peace he would have made in 1806; but there is no evidence to be produced from any part of his conduct that he has been willing to make a treaty which would prevent him from making aggressions on the dominions of other states. He has

manifested no inclination to cease from his ambitious projects, to confine himself within the bounds of his present conquests, and to turn his attention to the internal improvement of his dominions. When a change of ministry placed the reins of government in the hands of the passive Addington party, he concluded an indefinite peace, and agreeable to his intentions continued his aggressions with as much ardour as ever. When that conduct was resisted, the peace was broken. The change of ministry which followed the death of Mr. Pitt, afforded another opportunity to negotiate on similar terms. The new administration was composed and supported by a number of characters who had uniformly been pacifically disposed to France, who had praised the *virtues*, and exculpated the crimes of that government. On this ministry France presumed as more suited to her purposes than any other that had had the direction of the British councils since the revolution. The affair of the assassin afforded an opportunity to try its temper, and the experiment was made. The negotiation was entered upon on the basis of the *uti possidetis*, or state of *actual possession*; but the English diplomacy was not equal to the French. This basis was evidently allowed by the French minister, but it was only *verbally* allowed, and that in terms somewhat equivocal. This was the snare into which the British ministers were first led. The basis ought to have been expressed in *writing*; but, perhaps, an overweening confidence in the good faith of France might be the inducement to accept the mere *verbal professions* of the French minister! This basis, you, however, assert was not the original one on which the negotiation commenced, (see pages 48 and 49.) "It appears that, up to the 4th of June, the principle of 'the state of actual possession' had neither been assented to, nor even proposed by either of the parties." In this you are certainly in an error, and you have only resorted to the tergiversation of the French

minister, who, availing himself of his having only given a *verbal* assent to this principle, proceeded to deny his former professions, and to change the basis. That Mr. Fox himself entered upon the negociation on this ground is evident from his dispatch to Earl Yarmouth, dated June 26th, which has this passage: "I am very happy to learn that M. Talleyrand acknowledges your accounts of former conversations to be accurately correct; but when he does acknowledge this, I have no conception on what ground he can recede from what he said so distinctly to your Lordship before, upon the subject of Sicily. 'You are in possession of it; we ask nothing from you,' are words that made the more impression on me, because those contained in the latter clause of the sentence had been used by his Excellency in one of his letters to me. It was on the faith of the *uti possidetis* being to be strictly observed as the basis, and particularly Sicily, on which satisfaction had been given to your Lordship, that his Majesty was induced to authorize your Lordship to hold further conferences with M. Talleyrand. Any tergiversation or cayil therefore on that article, would be a breach of the principle of the proposed basis in its most essential part." On this principle, therefore, the negociation commenced; but if the French minister seemed to allow it, it was evidently with the design of amusing the British ministry until the sinuous and dangerous policy of his court might take effect. Russia and England, the one a great military power, and the other the greatest naval power in the world, whilst united, were yet dangerous enemies to France. The cause of the continent was not hopeless, although three coalitions had been defeated; for, as the subsequent campaign proved, Russia *alone* was not a contemptible enemy. If the negociation had any other object than to keep England at a distance from Prussia until the designs of France upon that power were ripe for execution, and Prussia being

defeated, that Russia might be left alone to contend with the immense military force of Bonaparte ; that object was to divide England and Russia, and by embroiling these two powers, to establish the influence of France over the continent by negociation, rather than risk the chances of open war. Or rather, perhaps, it is not too much to say, that these two objects were attempted at the same time. Agreeable to this intrigue, while our ambassador was amused by the *implied uti possidetis*, M. D'Oubriel, the Russian minister, was induced to sign a separate treaty. The terms then proposed to England were advanced, and the original basis denied and ridiculed by the French government. When the attempt to separate Russia from England had failed, and the treaty was returned unratified by the Emperor Alexander, the diplomatic force of France was employed in the opposite direction, and, to induce England to separate herself from Russia, terms more nearly approaching the former basis were offered. But when the British ministry (now fully awake to the designs of France) had resolved not to treat but in conjunction with Russia, the negociation was broken off ; and France, disappointed in her designs, resolved rather to risk a war for which she had all along been making the most active preparations, than to submit to a peace, the conditions of which, though honourable to her and her allies, would have *marked her boundary, and provided for the permanent repose of Europe.*

When, therefore, you stretch the expression in his Majesty's recent declaration against the Emperor of Russia, " that the last negociation was broken off " upon points immediately affecting, not his majesty's " own interests, but those of his Imperial ally," to signify that the contest was wholly continued, " for " interests not his own," you certainly misrepresent the subject, and in imitation of the petty party journalists of the day, give it a meaning which it could never be designed to convey. Although the demands

of Russia were the *immediate* subjects of discussion when the negotiations terminated, the *interests of Britain* were not secured. The original basis was not again reverted to, and if France had agreed to the terms proposed by Russia as far as they related to herself, the interests of this country and its allies would still have remained unadjusted. His Majesty's declaration of 1806, on the failure of this negotiation, contains a full confirmation of this remark. "In consequence of this important event;" (the refusal of the Emperor of Russia to sign the separate treaty) "the strongest assurances were given " to his majesty's minister, that France was now prepared to make sacrifices to a great extent in order, " by securing peace with Great Britain, to re-establish " the tranquillity of the world. Terms were offered " to his majesty more nearly approaching than before to the original basis of negotiation, but *these were still far short of what his majesty had uniformly insisted on*, and was now more than ever entitled to " expect; and the decisive rejection of the just demands of Russia, as well as of the conditions proposed by his majesty *in behalf of his other allies*, left to " his majesty no other course than that of ordering " his minister to terminate the discussions and to return to England." Another paragraph from the same instrument may also serve to illustrate the real character of the government with which we were treating for peace; and as it is the production of a favourite ministry, you will perhaps feel rather awkward at objecting to its statements. After mentioning the conclusion of a separate treaty with the Russian minister, the declaration proceeds, "The French court, on the contrary, elated by this advantage, " of which it boasted as equal in importance to the " most decisive victory, departed in every conference " more and more widely from *its own offers and engagements*. Not only did it take upon itself to change " at its own pleasure the basis of the negotiation with " Great Britain, but it violated, in points still more

“ important, every principle of good faith with Russia. The chief inducement offered to that power “ as the price of all the sacrifices extorted from her “ minister, had been the preservation of Germany; “ yet, before the decision of Russia on this treaty could “ be known, France had already annihilated the whole “ frame and constitution of the German empire; had “ reduced under her own yoke a large portion of the “ states and provinces of Germany; and, not content “ with this open contempt of obligations so recently con- “ tracted, had at the same time instigated the Porte to “ measures directly subversive of the subsisting engage- “ ments with Russia.”

The whig administration could not then make peace. Their sincerity will not be questioned, but they found that no terms could be agreed upon which could render that peace secure. Had it been only for Russian interests that the negociation was broken off, that ground would have been sufficient, inasmuch as it was absolutely necessary that Britain should have allies on the continent to check or in some degree balance the immense influence of France, and that our good faith to Russia should be preserved immaculate. But our own *interests* were not, according to that ministry, secured; there was no frankness, no cordiality on the part of France, and her conduct in pursuing a system of aggression in defiance of the surreptitious treaty she had concluded with Russia, made it evident that if England had agreed to a peace with France, on the terms proposed by the latter, that peace, like the peace of Amiens, would, from the prevalent ambition of the enemy, been only an uneasy and vexatious truce, a mere prelude to another war. I am free to grant with you (page 55) “ that the British ministers did not “ compromise the dignity, nor commit the charac- “ ter of the country;” but they certainly committed their own characters as negotiators. Never were any persons more completely entangled in the snares of French intrigue, or so conveniently kept at bay

until the designs of France, upon what remained of independence on the continent, were fully matured. But there is a more serious charge; not only their want of diplomatic skill, has been the subject of public censure, but their inaction, their criminal want of judgment, and the total absence of all energy in the prosecution of that war they found themselves compelled to continue. During the time the negociation was pending, and especially from the moment that the French government began to depart from the accepted basis first offered, the utmost activity ought to have prevailed at home. France never ceased from military preparations,—why then did we half sheath the sword? All ought to have been in motion throughout the military and naval departments. Transports ought to have been taken up, and every disposable regiment in the kingdom marched down to the coast to have embarked at a moment's notice. Either in that case the negotia-tion would have been influenced, or a firm and numerous body of British troops would have been ready to co-operate with our allies. But nothing was done, but what was narrow in its principle, and injudicious in its direction.

This is a part of your subject which you have dis-patched with the utmost brevity. “Of the part which “Great Britain acted in this dreadful struggle, it is “not necessary to say much. The inefficacy of that “union between her and Russia, which had been so “triumphantly dwelt upon, as likely to restrain or “overturn the power of France, soon became mani-fest.—Debarred by her natural situation, it was “not in the power of Great Britain to assist her ally “by the aid of a single man, or even to effect a “diversion of any importance in his favour; and she “thus stood a silent spectator of the additional ruin “to the governments of Europe consequent upon “the fatal rejection of the terms offered but a few “months before by the ruler of the French.” (page 66.) England did stand a “silent spectator” of this

eventful contest, but it is to the eternal shame of those who then had the command of her energies. When you say that it was out of the power of England to assist Russia by the aid of a single man, the assertion is bold and unsubstantiated. It is false. Russia might have been assisted, Russia had the promise of the British ministry to assist her, but the promise was not kept. The dull negative policy of that administration was a subject of reprobation at the time they were in office, but the papers of late laid before the parliament *at their own request*, have rendered their condemnation complete. In October, after the unfortunate opening of the Prussian campaign, Lord Howick, in his dispatches to the British minister at St. Petersburg, instructs him to urge the immediate advance of the Russian armies, and "*the application of all the forces of that empire in aid of the continental war.*" In November his lordship observes, in another dispatch, that "*the increase of the danger will animate his Britannic majesty to increased exertions for the sake of the common cause.*" In December, the Marquis of Douglas is instructed to inform the Russian court, that "*the same sentiment was entertained at London as at St. Petersburgh of the necessity of combined exertion to resist the increasing danger.*" To meet these views of the British government the emperor required a loan of £ 6,000,000 sterling, to be repaid with interest; General Budberg alleging "*the extraordinary expense which the vigorous measures in which his imperial majesty was engaged, imposed upon him, and which could not with sufficient promptitude be drawn out of the resources of Russia.*" This loan was refused and no other means devised to meet the expense of the Russian armies. The negotiation for this supply was conducted by Lord Howick in the true spirit of a stock broker, and afforded an early proof of that niggardly spirit of economy shown by the late administration, which first crippled the Russian armies, and afterwards their own expedi-

tions. It was a blunder only worthy of the men who then managed our foreign relations, to urge the rapid march of all the military power of the Russian empire to fight our battles, and then to leave them to absolute starvation! In February, the Russian court began to complain "that the promises of England " were not put into execution, and that the whole of "the enemy's forces were directed against Russia, " at a time when Great Britain did not show any dis- "position to diminish the danger by a diversion "against France and Holland." These complaints became louder and more pressing, and were answered by excuses respecting the season of the year, promises of co-operation the first opportunity, and a demand for the renewal of the commercial treaty! Lord Hutchinson, in March, in a dispatch to Howick, strongly recommends a diversion in the rear of the French, which he asserts would create serious embarrassments, and oblige them to detach such a number of troops as would soon leave them inferior to the allies. The Marquis of Douglas also presses the same subject, and observes in his dispatch dated April 27, 1807. "*it is impossible that I should be deaf to the murmurs that surround me, to the expectation of thousands. I cannot without jealousy look to the possible consequences.*" Was aid ever sent? "Up to "this day, (June 30,) General Budberg observes, "that the diversion on the continent which England "has so long proposed has not taken place." All Europe knows the result of what the British ministry at length attempted to do. Insanity itself could scarcely have devised measures more irrelevant to the great purposes of the war than were adopted. There was every possible motive to exertion, and it was invited by the fairest prospect of success the allied cause had ever exhibited. The cause which was contested on the banks of the Vistula was as certainly the cause of England as the cause of Russia. England had in fact more to fear from the colossal power of France and the prostra-

tion of Germany, because France is her natural rival, and her most formidable enemy. She was therefore bound by every tie of interest and of honour, as well as by express stipulations, to have employed every possible energy in aiding the only power on the continent capable of resisting France. So far from your assertion, Sir, being correct, that England "could not aid Russia by a single man," she might have aided her with *fifty thousand*, if decision and vigour had not been displaced by indifference and imbecility. The great, the indispensable object was to relieve Russia from the undivided pressure of the French force. This might have been done by a descent on Holland or Italy, or by a diversion on the rear of the French army in Poland; where, according to the opinion of Lord Hutchinson, Stralsund, in every event, would have opened a secure retreat to the British troops. But nothing could rouse the torpidity of that ministry. Whilst they were negotiating at Paris, they ought to have been preparing for war; neglecting that till the approach of winter, instead of preparing the promised expedition, so that it might have been dispatched early in the season, they were dreaming of frosts which were never felt, and of storms which never blew; and at last, when they began to do *something*, there was no *great effort* in aid of the common cause, and the ill success of their partial, divided, and useless expeditions, served only to provoke the contempt of our enemies, to alienate our allies, and to plunge the country into its present embarrassment.*

* "Schemes of internal improvement," which ministers have manifested their determination to pursue.—What! when empires and potent kingdoms in the twinkling of an eye are daily vanishing from our sight—when, at the pointing of the great necromancer's sabre, Victory conducts his legions to battle, and Dominion takes her course in the direction he bids, are we to counteract the spell, by making auditors of accounts? Are we to avert from ourselves the mighty mischief that has overwhelmed so many nations, by "improving" the law courts beyond the Tweed?—As many "internal improvements" as ministers please, but as foundations of

I shall not follow you into your remarks on the expedition to Copenhagen, because it has met a complete discussion in the British senate, and I believe every man in the kingdom has made up his mind on the subject. For myself, I consider it as I have always done—*a wise and a just measure*. Just, because Denmark had ceased to be a free agent; and it became our indispensable duty to wrest a weapon of offence out of her hands which she had no other option than to employ against us; and wise, because by that means we have broken a second time the force of a northern confederacy, and left our navy at liberty from watching additional hostile squadrons, to defend our own commerce, and injure that of the enemy. The *necessity* of the measure is its justification, and that *necessity* has been, by the debates in parliament and various political writings, completely proved to the country. On this obvious principle the merits of the question rests; here it challenges discussion, and defies the *state tricks* of a discontented opposition, who attempt to reprobate it, because the vigour of its execution puts the imbecility of their administration to the blush. You have said, in order to enhance the horrors of that affair, that it has thrown Denmark into the arms of France; but she was before in the arms of France, because she was completely under the power of France—that the ports of Holland have been more rigidly closed against our commerce; but they have not been more *effectually* closed since that time than before—that Russia has been made our enemy; but, Sir, the hostility of Russia was anterior to that event:

their fame as statesmen, in the present crisis of England's destiny, such petty objects are very trash and trumpery. Napolean, I doubt not, has his internal improvements in finance and police, but these are not the things of which you hear. To place France at the head of nations, and himself at the head of all conquerors, are *his* objects. *To place England on the rock of security, to preserve her independence and her honour, ought to be the leading object of her ministers.* —Major Cartwright's letter to Mr. Whitbread, in Cobbett's Register, December, 1806.

it arose from the criminal neglect of that ally by your favourite ministry, by which she was reduced under the power and influence of France. The papers respecting Russia, lately laid before parliament, prove that this was the *remote cause* of the present Russian war, and that the *immediate cause* was not the attack on Denmark, for after that was known the Russian government manifested an inclination to conciliation with England ; but the “*incalculable influence*” obtained by the French over the Russian councils in consequence of their victories. You have also said that our conduct towards Denmark has excited all Europe against us. But, Sir, from what can you judge of the sentiments of European states, but from the state papers of powers under the immediate control of France, and from *newspapers* equally controlled. These sources are certainly not much to be depended upon. There is no organ of the public sentiment on the continent. Since the murder of Palm, what writer has dared to impugn the policy of Napolean, or applaud the conduct of his enemies ? The press there is brought to that state of submission to the dictates of France, to which you, in a former part of your pamphlet, appear to have wished the English press to have been reduced. But, Sir, there are proofs *against you* more unequivocal. The court of Portugal has thrown itself into the arms of England, this great *violator of the law of nations*. Sweden has not joined in the universal cry of “*horror and detestation.*” Prussia has declared war without reproaching us ; and Austria has given offence to the mighty emperor and king because she has refused to join the hue and cry raised by the artifice of France against England. Your complaint of the injury done to the national character and to the principles of public morality, could only have weight in case the injustice of the expedition to Copenhagen had been proved ; but it has not been proved, and we have therefore the satisfaction to conclude that the national character is, up to this moment, *unassul-*

lied, and that it has suffered no eclipse from the seizure of the Danish fleet.

The conclusion of your publication is as singular as its general structure. In page 96, you recapitulate your arguments. "If it should appear, as I have attempted to show, that the war which began in 1803, was instigated by a few interested and unprincipled individuals, and by a spirit of animosity and rancour which blew up into a conflagration, a contemptible dispute about the island of Malta —that in the year 1806, peace might have been established if we had not preferred the interests of Russia to our own, and that this cause of hostilities is now removed by the treaty of Tilsit, and the declaration of war by Russia against Great Britain—the reasons alleged in support of the war are weak and futile, and its further prosecution promises no advantages equal to the difficulties and dangers we must inevitably incur from it, and therefore we ought to approach the throne of the sovereign in dutiful and loyal addresses, &c." But, Sir, as far as this conclusion is founded upon the view of facts and arguments contained in the former part of your pamphlet, it is evidently premature, because, as I have shown, the principles you have assumed in the discussion are fallacious. You have not proved the impolicy of the war though you have condemned it. You have not proved the disposition of the enemy to enter into and to preserve the relations of amity with England, though you have asserted it. You have not proved the unwillingness of the British administrations who have most vigorously supported the war to make peace upon honourable terms, though you had denounced them the advocates of perpetual war. Your conclusion may therefore be deemed as unsound in policy and as unsupported by argument as your former statements. In imitation of you I may also recapitulate. If, as I have attempted to show, the ardent spirit of democratical proselytism, operat-

ing upon the natural ambition of the French people, produced an unbounded ambition, and a thirst of universal dominion ;—that a plan of aggression and encroachment upon other states was laid by their ablest men in the earliest periods of the revolution, and has since been uniformly followed under every mode of government, whether republican, consular, or imperial ;—that the French revolution not only overturned the political, but the moral system of that country, and by destroying a sense of religious obligation, gave rise to the perpetration of every crime, at home and abroad, which wantonness, cruelty, or rapine could devise, and to a system of foreign policy, cunning, perfidious, and dangerous to every other power ; the execution of which it has committed into the hands of men equally base in their origin and their principles, and the more dangerous because possessed of great talents ;—that the peace of Amiens was broken by the aggressions of the enemy, whose object in making the peace was evidently to unite the advantages of commerce by a peace, with foreign spoliations, which were committed with as little ceremony as in war, and that the renewal of hostilities was sanctioned, “not by ‘bands of hireling journalists,’ but by the *nation*, and the *most respectable persons of all parties* ;—that the negociation in 1806 failed, according to the confession of the very men who, before that time, and almost ever since, have most clamorously cried out for peace, because peace could not be obtained on terms consistent with “*national honour and security* ;” that throughout the whole of the contest the enemy has never manifested any serious intention to conclude a peace but such a one as would leave him fully at liberty to pursue a system of aggression against this country and its allies, in a word, against the world :—it will then follow that to make peace with an enemy of so dangerous a character, whose hatred to this country has been on every occasion unequivocally expressed, who has made it evident that he

respects not the faith of treaties, and who is determined, whether in peace or war, to pursue the suggestions of his own lawless ambition, demands at least the utmost caution; and that the present hostile disposition he appears to possess, and even the terms of peace he has lately obliquely hinted to us, ought "to unite us more closely in the prosecution " of the war, and reconcile us to make such further "sacrifices as we may yet be called upon to make," (page 97.)

The great conclusions you wish to establish are, that an *immediate* peace is necessary for the country; that a peace may be obtained which will effectually secure its true interests; and that it is proper to petition the throne to open a negociation for this purpose. But lest the history you have given of the conduct and consequences of the war should fail to produce entire conviction, you have endeavoured in your concluding pages to enforce the subject by several supernumerary considerations and arguments; which, like a reserved corps, may be brought up as occasion serves, to support the main body. You endeavour first to engage the *sympathy* of your readers on your side, by a feeling, and, I will allow, well drawn portrait, of the miseries of war; next, you apply to our *fears*, by stating the probability that in case the contest is continued, France will be able to create a navy, which may completely overwhelm the marine of this country, and effect an entire conquest of these islands; and lastly, that no string may remain untouched, you have a secret to whisper to our *hopes*—that peace will infallibly bring with it the return of commerce and wealth, and open to us the prospect of the most extensive national aggrandizement.

To be unfeeling to the sufferings necessarily attendant upon a state of warfare, would discover a heart which almost every man would be ashamed to own; but sympathetic feeling is not confined to the philosopher of Allerton, or to the party who now

most assiduously endeavour to storm the government into negociation. It is felt in as great a degree of purity and power in the breasts of those who most cordially approve of the measures of his majesty's present ministers, and who are willing to combine all their energies to give effect to the war, only to secure a permanent peace, as in any body of men whatever. But, Sir, there is a false sensibility which hastens the evils it deprecates, and prolongs those it wishes to remove. Sensibility like every other feeling must be controlled and directed by reason before it can become a safe rule of action, and without this it is rather an impulse of the blood, than an amiable quality of the mind. Should the sensibility of a surgeon prevent him from amputating a mortifying limb, he would release his patient from the pain of the knife, only to resign him to the agonies of death. It is a sound maxim which we may venture to set against a host of fastidious sympathies,

“ Rather to bear the ills we have,
“ Than fly to others that we know not of;”

and more especially when in our patient endurance of these ills lies the only certain means of their alleviation. “ Far be from me the idea,” says M. F. Ancillon in his Tableau des Révolutions du Système Politique de L'Europe, &c. “ of lessening the natural horror which war inspires, and in which I participate with all the friends of humanity! I desire only to prove that, in the general chain of events, good may sometimes arise from that destructive scourge. Peace is, and always will be, the first of earthly blessings; but a nation ought never to forget that there is an evil greater than war, it is the loss of her political independence, and of her national existence.” But these, you tell us, “ are the result of the fears of the weak, who, in the apprehension of distant dangers, are insensible to those which are immediately impending over them.” By persevering in the contest we shall in all probability “ school the navies of France to

"umph over ourselves." This, it is true, is attacking our fears where they are the most alive, for from the moment our marine is conquered we are blotted out from the nations of Europe. Fears, however, of such an event I should certainly be inclined to place amongst the "*fears of the weak.*" Bonaparte has used every means which his own resources and his influence over other powers has furnished, to rival the British navy; but every effort of this kind has been defeated by the skill and courage of our commanders, and the wise and vigorous measures of our government. His own powerful fleets having been almost annihilated, his next attempt was to seize those of weaker powers, and by combining them with the force of his allies in a general confederacy, to dispute with us the empire of the ocean. That plan has been broken, and the confederacy destroyed in its bud. France may build ships, but during the war she cannot fill them with seamen. Not only her intercourse with her colonies is suspended, but even her own coasting trade: she has in consequence no nursery for seamen. These must be trained by long or frequent voyages, which, whilst the war continues, cannot be made. *Peace* alone must replenish the navy of France, and long experience render it efficient. This I confess I do not regard as any impediment to a peace with France. I have that confidence in the superior skill and valour of British seamen, that I should feel no uneasiness respecting the result of a naval engagement under the best circumstances in which France could place her navy, in case of a renewal of war. But if this be no hinderance to peace, so, allowing your opinion that it is probable France may create a formidable marine should we persevere in the contest, I do not think it any argument in favour of submission. This cannot terrify us into a premature and a false peace. Should peace bring out of her ports a navy equal or superior in number to our own, we should, do as we have done before, confide in the justice of

our cause and the blessing of Providence to add another to the splendid list of naval victories which adorn our annals. Whether in peace or war, I believe, to use your own words, "if we are but true "to ourselves, we may regard all the efforts of "France to rival us, as a maritime power, without "dismay."

The prosperity of our commerce, of which, in the event of a peace, you have given so glowing a picture, must depend wholly upon the terms of that peace. I am not an advocate for perpetual war; but I am an advocate for the continuance and vigorous prosecution of the war until such a peace can be obtained as will place the country in a secure and prosperous situation. The next peace we make will, it is probable, either sign our death warrant or secure our privileges for ever. It is not the partial interest of our merchants and manufacturers that is now at stake, it is *the interest of the empire, and of posterity*. That we can *now* make such a peace, as will secure our *great* interests, and preserve our independence and national strength unsullied and unimpaired to our children, is at least doubtful; and in the opinion of as wise, as disinterested, and as patriotic characters as the nation can boast, impossible. It is strange that you insist so forcibly on the necessity of making an immediate peace without mentioning the terms on which it is probable it may be obtained. But you wish to inspire a confidence in the moderation of the French government, which is most sincerely to be deprecated. It is the most fatal error into which we can fall, and no one can more essentially injure his country than by promoting it. With such an enemy every suspicion ought to be awake. Neither the character of Bonaparte nor that of the nation he governs, in its present state, is entitled to confidence. Justice and honour are out of the question; interest and ambition alone are the principles of their conduct. We can never expect a peace on terms to which Eng-

land ought to submit, until it is the *interest* of France to make it, and in all probability the conditions of that peace will be no longer observed by the present government of France, than while they accord with the state of its interests or the views of its ambition. Peace with such a government, it is evident, can hold out no cheering prospect to Great Britain, either in its arrangements or its permanence, until France imperiously feels it to be her interest to make peace, and her interest to observe it.

Such a state of things I, however, think is rapidly approaching, and, as it approximates, brings with it a fairer and more enlivening prospect of terminating the war in a manner which may prevent its speedy renewal. So long since as the affair of Ulm, Bonaparte observed to General Mack, that he wanted "ships, colonies, and commerce." These wants cannot be now less pressing. They are redoubled. The navy of France has been brought, since that time, to a still lower degree of degradation; the colonies of France, and her dependant states, are become more limited; the practicability of intercourse with those that remain, is rendered a matter of the most difficult enterprise; and the commerce of France, before too contracted to produce very favourable efforts upon her internal wealth, or internal maritime importance, has been reduced to the brink of annihilation, by the unprecedented and unjust regulations of her own decrees. If the attainment of these objects be motives to conciliation with this country, they operate upon France with a force increased by the lapse of every year, and every day. France has enlarged her territory to an extent unknown in the annals of her history: but she has neither secured to herself nor to her newly organized states, the means of rendering that empire great and prosperous. Society must, at least, assume the appearance of tranquillity, before industry can be excited to those exertions which will produce more than the mere supply of necessary wants; and it is

peace alone which, by encouraging general commerce, can recruit the energies of countries exhausted by revolutions, by exactions, and by war. Portugal and Spain are now wholly separated from those colonies from which they derived their whole support, and on which they had been accustomed for ages to depend ; Holland is reduced to the verge of absolute ruin ; France has lost the only medium through which her foreign commerce could circulate, the intercourse of neutrals ; and Russia, blinded for a time by councils, the labyrinths of which she appears scarcely to have the capacity to explore, has engaged in a contest in which she has every thing to lose, and little, essential to her real interests, to gain. Bonaparte boasts of an army of 800,000 soldiers, but not the whole of this force is able to annihilate a single British frigate, not the whole of this force can give effect to his decrees beyond the limits of his own harbours ; and he must either be content to stretch his sceptre over wildness and desolation, or give prosperity to the continent by a peace which shall open the navigation of the seas, and unite the interests of Europe by reciprocating the productions of its soil, and mechanical skill, through the medium of a maritime intercourse.

But this state of things ought rather to encourage our perseverance and patience than weaken our efforts. It cannot be inferred from this, that the time is arrived when a peace with France may be made with advantage. Every day's intelligence from the continent proves how greatly every state at enmity with this country is suffering from the interruption of its commerce ; but "the tyrant of the continent," supported by his immense military force, has the means for a time of stifling their murmurs, and crushing their resistance. He will, in the contest into which he brings their sufferance with the power of Britain, push them to the utmost limits of endurance ; and will first try the extent of *our* patience and firmness, before he will relieve *their* pres-

sures by entering into liberal arrangements for a general peace. We, too, must feel for our share of privations, though, from the riches left in the country by a flourishing commerce which has but of late met any diminution, and the foreign trade we can still command, we shall feel them in a much smaller degree than the continental states; but it can only be by a patriotic display of fortitude and perseverance on our part that the contest will be brought to a speedier termination. Our navy is the only means left us of offensive attack; it is the right arm of our country, and must be wielded with vigour. It is in reality, what the lever of Archimedes was in imagination, *the power that moves the world*; but if its energies require to be applied with skill, it must also derive its full effect from the operation of *united strength*. To relax in our endeavours would not relieve us from the operation of the blockading decrees of Bonaparte, which existed before this country resorted to measures of retaliation; and if ever we make a good peace it must be when the country stands in the most menacing attitude: when it presents an undaunted front both to external threats, and to domestic suffering. To yield is ruin, and to betray impatience is to throw ourselves at the feet of the enemy.

It is on this account, Sir, that I can by no means agree with you in recommending petitions to the throne for peace. That they have in some places been promoted out of mere party motives is too much to be suspected; but if we concede the goodness of their intention, it requires few arguments to show their impolicy, and that they are of little weight in a question of national policy. Nothing can be more easy than to gain signatures to such instruments from any number of manufacturers and mechanics who are suffering in consequence of the war; but such acts being only expressions of personal privations, and not the results of enlightened and extensive views of the relations of the country, are of no

authority in a question of peace or war. I am far, very far, from thinking that the distress of our manufacturers ought to be passed over without notice ; on the contrary, they ought to fix the attention not only of the government, but of the opulent part of the community without exception. The state of the lower classes, where the pressure of the war falls heaviest, ought to be, as far as possible, relieved. Because they are incapable of feeling the force of those motives which should lead a people in times of national exigency to submit to sacrifices, and because they are unable to submit to them, they ought to be relieved : and I think patriotism may devise the means to afford that relief. The present contest ought to be supported until we can secure a peace, safe and honourable to the country ; but it ought to be supported by retrenching unnecessary expenditure in the state, and by the sacrifices of the rich, not of the poor. Had these been petitions to government for relief, they would have deserved the attention of parliament, and the support of the country ; but as they assume to prescribe to ministers the time of entering into negotiations with the enemy, they bear very suspicious marks of the design of a party, operating upon the feelings of the populace to effect that change of policy by constraint, for which other measures have been found ineffectual. In this respect they not only serve the purposes of a party, but of the common enemy. It is known in France, that there is a party in England which clamours for immediate peace ; that would feel little hesitation, so great is their confidence in the magnanimous Emperor of the French, to send a *carte blanche*, and desire him to write his own conditions. Bonaparte wishes to animate this party, to create dissension, to produce distrust, and thus, by clogging the wheels of government, to paralyze those efforts by which Britain struggles to support her independence, and to maintain her honour. Did ministers wantonly withhold the return of peace from the nation, the petitions might

on that ground be defended, but of this there is no proof, except the singular one you have mentioned in one part of your publication, that they were the coadjutors of Mr. Pitt! They have, however, openly professed their sincere desire to make peace as soon as it can be done with safety, and in this respect I see no reason why they should not be entitled to credit. Peace on terms consistent with the national welfare would be so universally popular, that ministers of any political opinions would be anxious to accomplish it as a measure which, more than any other, would tend to secure the confidence and love of the people, and to fix themselves securely in their elevated situations; and, in fact, there is something so tempting in it, that it ought rather to be feared that it may be restored to us too early, than withheld from us by design.

But you have told us repeatedly that, since the separation of Russia from our interests, "all the motives which were urged for the prosecution of the war, have ceased to operate, and that we are now left without an ally, without an object, and without a cause." If so, it is certainly high time to turn our thoughts to the termination of a worse than useless struggle, and to employ ourselves in something more rational than a contest which has neither motive nor object. The late ministry by their neglect of Russia, it is true, have left us without *an ally* of importance, but the consequences of their misconduct have not been so fortunate in leaving us quite destitute of a *cause*. The defeat of the Russian arms, and the disgust produced in the mind of the Russian emperor, by the conduct of the British ministers in withholding their co-operation in the arduous contest in which he had been engaged, threw our most valuable ally into the arms of France. From that moment the principle of the war changed. France and Russia both joined in the same cause, and the object of that coalition was to attack, and force us to renounce, our *maritime* rights. To de-

fend these has hitherto been the immediate *object* of the war since that time; for what is the object of the enemy to destroy, is certainly our object to defend, and to preserve. The negotiations Bonaparte held out to us since that time has been therefore for a “*maritime peace*,” that is, a peace in which we shall renounce all interference and connexion with the continent of Europe, and render our naval rights and ancient maritime jurisprudence, the firmest bulwark of our safety and prosperity, the subject of discussion and infringement. This, then, is the kind of peace Bonaparte offers us, and these are the principles on which we must commence a negotiation if we commence it now. It remains then for you who wish an immediate peace, and who blame ministers for not concluding one, to say whether we shall take it on these conditions? No, Sir, we will not accept this *basis*; we will not suffer our naval superiority, the most precious gift of Providence, the most valuable legacy of our ancestors, and which has been confirmed to us by the valour of our contemporaries who have fought and died in our defence, to be made the subject of negotiation for a moment. Thank God, if we be true to ourselves, we can support the contest. Whilst our navy stands unshaken, amidst the wreck of nations, our trade will not only be protected, but enlarged. Difficulties only call forth the resources of a great people, and the resources of England are not exhausted. She still possesses an extensive commerce; and her capital, her industry, and her enterprise, must finally break down the barriers which are opposed to her prosperity. Bonaparte knows this, and he fears it; and if he cannot succeed in enervating us by disunion, he is evidently prepared to acknowledge those rights, against which he so loudly declaims, and which we for that reason ought as strenuously to defend. This, Sir, is the glorious *object* of the present struggle, it is the *object* we are called upon by every consideration of justice, honour, and inter-

est, to defend. It is dear to us as the soil on which we tread, as the constitution under which we live ; it is the only guarantee of our independence, and the only sure pledge of our future commercial prosperity. *If the sea cannot be our empire, let it be our grave.*

“ THIS IS THE TRUE POSITION, THIS IS THE HIGH
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“ OUGHT TO PURSUE.”

I am yours, &c.



JUN 5 1940

